

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
Park and Recreation Department  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall  
Monday, August 11, 2008  
3:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Janet Miller, Bryan Frye, Glen Dey, Tom Roth and Matt Goolsby

**Absent:** Andy Solter and John Stevens

**Also Present:** Doug Kupper, Director, Park and Recreation; Karen Walker, Assistant Director, Park and Recreation; Larry Foos, Recreation Superintendent; Don Harrison, Golf Course Superintendent; John Philbrick, City Real Estate Administrator; and Myca Bunch, staff.

President Miller called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC AGENDA**

No Items.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**Item 1. Approval of Minutes**

The Board agreed to delay the approval of the July meeting minutes until the September meeting due to requested changes.

**Item 2A: Southlakes Acquisition**

Kupper showed an aerial photo of the Southlakes Sports Complex and indicated an area where the County is requesting an area of ROW property. North of that area, the Park Department platted 60ft ROW for the building. Kupper introduced John Philbrick, City Real Estate Administrator who said the County is working on a project to widen Meridian Street and 47<sup>th</sup> St South to the City Limits. He said they are looking at a standard 60ft half street ROW, which is standard for arterial streets. The Southern portion of Southlakes is a 30ft half street and the County would like to use the additional 30 feet for their ROW. He said the fence that borders the west side of Southlakes sits 50ft from the center line of the road and the Northern portion of the fence is already located in the ROW area. The proposal would not impact any improvements to the fence, gates or to the landscape and all improvements would remain. Philbrick said if more changes in the future were needed, the agency responsible for doing the work would be

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responsible for the cost. He said they are asking the Park Board to allow them to ask City Council for the dedication of the easement.

Goolsby asked if this would be a 5 lane road. Philbrick said right now it would be a four lane road with no turning lanes. Goolsby asked why they needed the Board's permission and Kupper explained that under Charter Ordinance 125, the Board owns the land and therefore must grant approval of these requests.

Miller asked how granting the easement now would change plans if they later wanted to expand the road into 5 lanes. Philbrick said it would depend on whether the Board would do the plat in the future and if so, they would have to give the ROW of the plat as they have on the North side. He said if they do not plat but still want to expand without the easement, they can do so without the Park Board's approval. Kupper said the stipulation would be written into the easement agreement. Philbrick said one of the issues is that there is 500ft of fence that will become part of the ROW and another 850 ft of fence that is encroaching on the ROW now. He said that there would have to be an agreement to move the fence in its entirety.

Miller asked how this project differed from the widening of the area around MacDonald Golf Course. Philbrick said if they decide to never plat, the 500 ft fence is not an issue but that they could come and tear out the 800ft now. Kupper said the fence was put in before they decided to put a building at the South end of the Park. Under the OCI rules they had to plat the land in order to build the facility, therefore they only platted the area that was required to accommodate the building. Kupper said the fence was there when they first built the Southlakes complex.

**On Motion by Roth, second Frye, the Board voted to approve the easement of 60ft ROW on South Meridian.**

**Item 2B: Park Property at 372 S. Clifton**

Miller mentioned that over the years they have had several residents living close to park land that have made offers to buy park property. She said the Board generally declines these proposals and when they have encroachment issues onto park land they also ask residents to rectify the matter.

Miller introduced Ms. Peri Saner to speak.

Peri Saner, 1739 S. Yale St, Wichita

Mrs. Saner said she was speaking about the property that she owns located at 372 S. Clifton adjacent to College Hill Park. She provided the Board with handouts and pictures of the area around her property and of College Hill Park. Saner said that her parents passed away recently and while they lived at the Clifton home they routinely kept and cared for areas of the park that they discovered, after a survey, were not part of their property. Much of the area has been unkempt for years and is owned by the City. She said that there are large trees on the North side of her house that are rotting and need to be trimmed or removed. She said that there is rotting vegetation, trash and beer bottles all along the City property that abuts her land and it is also a

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huge breeding ground for mosquitoes and other wildlife. Ms. Saner said that on the East side of the property there is a volunteer forest with trees growing along their fence line and pushing the fence to the South. This is a safety issue as they cannot see through the trees and it makes the area very dark. There is also a Mulberry Tree with an 11in diameter trunk and very long branches that needs to be cut. She said the overgrown vegetation is an eyesore to the community.

Ms. Saner said that many years ago a hedge row was placed 25 ft north of the house that was never maintained by City crews. Her father was the one that took care of the area for many years. She said that there is currently a pile of rotting vegetation near this hedge row that is covered with spider webs and other insects. Ms. Saner showed pictures of many of the trees in the area that have dead limbs. She said that her father spent thousands of dollars cutting back the Elm tree located on the North side of the house to protect their roof.

Ms. Saner said she hopes that the City will allow her to purchase a strip of land 20ft x 150 ft on the North side of their house, running East and West. She said this would give them leeway on the North side to allow for landscaping and would give them equity to offset the expense of restoring and retaining the needed improvements. She said they would like to have a written agreement between the City in terms of what they could and could not do in terms of landscaping, which would be passed on to any future owners of the property. If the sale is not viable, she said they would like to have a written agreement with the Park Department to trim the trees, re-grow the grass, thin out the volunteer forest and consistently trim the Elm Tree away from their roof. Ms. Saner said she would even be welcome to the idea of the City reimbursing them for these services.

Ms. Saner also mentioned that there is a 20ft by 150ft area of land located North of 372 S. Clifton and South with an unkempt hedge row and has turned into a large mud hole with more rotting vegetation.

Kupper said that he officially apologized for the lack of maintenance and upkeep of the area. He said they did check with some of the Park employees that worked for the department when Ms. Saners' parents owned the property and they were led to believe, by their supervisors, that there was an agreement between her father and the park department director at that time, to allow them to expand his property line into the park by 20ft. Kupper said that he researched his files and did not find a formal written agreement stating these terms. Kupper said they are ready to go forward and completely clean up the area immediately.

Frye asked if the conditions of the park continue east toward Yale St. Ms. Saner said they did not look at that entire area but Kupper said he would look at the area from Clifton to Yale and make any necessary changes to improve the condition of the park property.

Miller said the Board recently received a similar request from a citizen wanting to purchase land that abutted his property, the Board declined. She said they have miles and miles of park land

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that abuts private party and that if they start selling the land now they will eventually set a precedent that it is ok to sell off park land.

Ms. Saner said the property line is in the middle of a hill and citizens cross over into the park by walking on their property. They would like to put a nice vanity fence in this area to entice citizens to walk around their property. Ms. Saner said they are looking at doing some major work to the house that will require major machinery and they may have to cut through the park land to reach the back side of their house. Kupper said that an agreement could possibly be arranged to allow them to drive the vehicles onto the park land with the stipulation that they do not tear up the land. Kupper said they will have to have further discussion on whether or not to remove the Elm Tree as it provides shade during the summer. Ms. Saner said the tree is beautiful but that the branches from it literally touch her windows. Kupper said they would definitely take a look at the tree and get it trimmed away from the house. Dye said that the tree could be cut in a fashion so that it would lie down on the house in case of an ice storm which would prevent any damage to the house.

**On motion by Miller, second by Frye, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED by the Board to decline the offer to purchase the property from the Park Department but asked staff to work with the Saner Family at the City's expense to clean the park up and bring it back to the appropriate standards.**

**Item 2C: Tennis Center Revenue**

Larry Foos spoke to the Board on the revenue of the tennis dome since its opening in May of 2007. Foos said the first three months of operations were mainly open for 'open play' and court rentals until they hired a second Tennis Pro and began more programs. He said the revenue projections for 2008 were \$96,200, which they have surpassed already. The expenditure budget for 2007 and 2008 was \$151,400. Foos said they have overspent their expenditure budget but that they have an additional influx of money coming from the budget. Kupper said in order to make money they have to spend the money but the budget does not grow appreciatively and they will need to go back to Council to gain additional expenditure authority.

Foos said the cost recovery prior to 2007 and before the Tennis Dome was built, was at 61%. Right now they are operating at 81%. He said as of the first week of August they had made \$11,000 and it appears that citizens are truly utilizing the facility.

Kupper said the contract Tennis Pros have now become City employees because of tax reasons.

Goolsby asked if the Dome has lived up to its expectations thus far. Kupper said there have not been any major malfunctions on any of the systems and that there is a 5 year warranty.

**Item 2D: October Meeting Discussion and Date**

Karen Walker asked the Board to consider moving the October Park Board meeting date as she and Kupper would be at the annual Park and Recreation Conference in Baltimore, MD

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On Motion by Miller, second by Goolsby, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to change the October meeting date to Monday, October 20, 2008.

**Item 2E: Nominating Committee for Park Board Elections**

Miller reminded the Board that the annual officer elections would be decided at the September Park Board retreat. She said that Roth and Solter have agreed to be the nominating representatives for the slate of officers. She said currently Bryan Frye serves as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and Glen Dey serves as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

**On motion by Miller, second by Goolsby, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that Andy Solter and Tom Roth act as the nominating panel for the 2008 elections.**

**Item 2F: Pathways Marker Update**

Miller reminded the Board of their decision to accept the proposal from Mr. Richard Schodorf to place pathway markers through the City parks and pathways.

Richard Schodorf, 2330 N. Valley View, Wichita, KS.

Mr. Schodorf informed the Board that portions of his original presentation had changed. He said they shopped around for the best price for the markers and they decided to stay with a local company and hope to have the markers in place by March of 2009. Schodorf showed an example of each marker and explained how they will differ every ½ mi and will reflect the different trails and directions. He said that some of the trails will overlap with others and that they have designed a color coded system to make it simple for citizens to follow the correct path. Schodorf said the current design will be presented to the Design Council in late August.

Schodorf said they have considered holding a contest within the community to help design the markers and the winners would have their name inscribed on the individual marker. Schodorf showed an example of the ½ mile stone marker. He said the stone would be purchased from Cornejo Construction at \$10.00 each and he intends to buy approximately 200 stone markers.

Schodorf provided another handout of the large signs which will be placed along the trails and in other areas to serve as a reminder to citizens that there is a walking path close by.

He said that after the Design Council meeting he will return to the Park Board to update them once again.

Goolsby asked if there has been any opposition from the public over labeling City property and the possibility of using the Sunflower Title logo on all of the markers. Schodorf said one person had a question at the design council but that the remaining Board members agreed that it was not a problem. Goolsby said so far that has been his only hesitation about the project, but he now realizes that these types of partnerships exist throughout the City.

Dey asked if there was any discussion about a possible Sunflower supported walking path in Grove Park which was promoted in terms of reserving the area for the elderly or physically disabled. He said that in their discussions they determined that this would prohibit roller skating or biking on that segment of path. Schodorf said he has talked to the Sunflower Foundation about this idea as well as the idea of creating children's parks and they agreed to look into the idea. Dey said they do not have the money for the signs.

### **Item 2G: Golf Course Markers**

Mr. Schodorf presented the idea of placing distance markers on each of the City's five municipal golf courses. He said for the average golfer the difference in each club is around 10 yards which makes the markings on a course very important to determine how far each golfer can hit a ball. Many times you see golfer walking around looking for markers to determine which club they will use. He said the third hole at Auburn Hills has many different options when hitting the ball but there is no way to determine the distance to the hole. He said he watched many golfers hit their ball right through the fairway. He said that problems like this occur at several other holes through Auburn Hills as well.

Schodorf said to fix these issues he proposes working with Don Harrison, Golf Course Superintendent, and together they will visit each course and use the representative that Harrison has worked with to design markers for each course. Schodorf said he will pay for the entire project and would like to use caps to be placed on each sprinkler head which would give golfers information to help them determine the distance to the hole. He said he estimates using around 100 of the markers for all five courses.

Schodorf said using these markers could possibly save 20 minutes per round from golfers having to take the time looking for their golf balls in the trees. Miller said that saved time also translates into potentially increased revenue through more tee times.

Harrison provided samples of what the sprinkler head covers could look like and explained that they are typical of what many golf courses use. He said he isn't sure if using the markers truly speeds up play or slows play down as there have always been different opinions on this. Harrison said he thinks it is an advantage to have the opportunity to use these and is pleased that Mr. Schodorf is offering to pay for the expenses. Dey asked if any of the Pro Shops sell the GPS devices and Harrison said they do.

Schodorf said if any of the sprinkler covers are stolen he would pay to have them replaced. Miller thanks Schodorf for his presentation and that she looked forward to hearing any future ideas.

### **Item 3A: Proposed Pocket Park – Habitat for Humanity**

Karen Walker provided a spreadsheet to the Board which outlined the one-time costs for implementing the Pocket Park. Walker said they were asked to provide \$15,000 for the

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playground but that they would also plant trees, add benches, trash receptacle and a park sign. She said that the actual onetime cost would be \$20,000. Walker said the maintenance fees would be around \$1,800 per year. She said that they also budgeted \$300 a year in graffiti removal but that cost could always change. Frye asked if many of the parks get graffiti. Kupper said the slides sometimes get hit with graffiti as well as over flat surfaces. He said this neighborhood is going to be fairly open and it will hopefully be watched over by the residents. Walker said they are taking this item to the City Council tomorrow for approval pending the Park Board's approval. Following that, they would take the item to property management and the legal office for further processing. Walker said they will initiate either the 2008 or the 2009 PFR Funds to pay for the project. Miller asked if any projects were being delayed due to this project. Kupper replied no.

Linda Stewart, from Habitat for Humanity, spoke and said if the land still belongs to them their insurance would cover the volunteer workers. Kupper said he has to have ownership of the land before they can pay the money. He said the City can cover insurance for the volunteers. Stewart said they are 40% complete with the village and are looking at completing the entire village in 2009.

**On Motion by Goolsby, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the proposal from Wichita Habitat for Humanity for a pocket park to be built in the Habitat Village with the approved funding from the Park Department.**

**Item 4: Review of Pending Issues**

No Items.

**Item 5. Updates from the Director and President**

Miller reminded the Board members that the Annual Park Board retreat will be held on September 20, 2008 at Botanica.

**Item 6. Issues on the Horizon**

Miller said the church on the Northwest corner near Sycamore Park is looking to expand their facility and may visit the Board with the request to purchase a portion of the park. Miller said she informed them that there was a precedent of not selling park land in this area as they were approached with a similar offer before but that the Park Board is always willing to hear new requests. She said the requesters are in the process of talking to their Neighborhood Association to gain their support for the project. Miller said there is CIP money set aside for improvements to Sycamore Park.

Frye said he looked into the request to change the park hours at Sunset Park from sunrise to sunset. Frye said he talked to the community police at the Park and they said changing and marking the park hours as sunrise to sunset would help curtail the disturbances.

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Frye said at the last DAB V meeting they discussed the Country Acres Park and how they would like to create a new housing community in that area to include single family residences and an assisted living complex. This is the project the Park Board has heard about several times and recently approved. Frye said there is a planned bike path that goes from 13<sup>th</sup> to Central that was considered by the DAB, too. He said that both items were approved and were subject to platting. Frye said he was very clear to the developers to ensure that since the area will be a gated community they must ensure that the bike path is still accessible to the public. Miller said the developers will eventually come back to the Board to ask for a zoning change of the two parcels of land.

Miller said there was a reference to money in the Sedgwick County budget for improvements to a regional park in South Wichita. Miller said she was wondering if this was the City's property at 71<sup>st</sup> St South and Arkansas. Kupper said that the staff at Sedgwick County placed \$150,000 of their CIP money for Planeview Park. Kupper said he would find out more information and brief the Board at the October meeting.

Goolsby asked if an official motion needed to be made to forgo the original monthly meeting in September due to the retreat meeting. Miller agreed.

**On Motion by Goolsby, second by Frye, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to cancel the original September meeting in lieu of the Park Board Retreat to be held on September 20, 2008.**

**Item 7. Adjourn**

Miller adjourned at approximately 6:00p.m.

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Janet L. Miller, President

ATTEST:

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Myca J. Bunch, Recording Secretary